

do it.” Not realistic; so we had devices there so you had to go do the job and the unit had to be trained to do it.

So, Ranger School taught me that you don’t need to compromise with training. You can make it realistic and then you get full value from it. So, don’t compromise; keep your standards high for training, and then the unit will benefit from that.

### **23d Engineers, 3d Armored Division**

Q: So, you reported as a platoon leader?

A: Yes, I reported to Germany to be a platoon leader in C Company of the 23d Engineer Battalion.

Q: 23d Engineers. Who was your company commander?

A: Tommy G. Smith was my company commander. Started off with a bang.

Q: What was it like being a platoon leader?

A: Well, it’s something you look forward to with some relish. It was a super experience. I have to say once again how Ranger School and West Point, the sense of duty, the sense of mission that you got out of those places, make you ready and confident in what you can do.

The day I arrived in Germany was Rose Monday. It was the last celebrating day of Fasching. Germans go bonkers celebrating the pre-Lenten season. My classmate, Chuck Brinkley, had gone straight to airborne and come over. Another classmate, Ernie Ruffner, was also in the battalion with me. Chuck was a bachelor and already well at home. He said, “Come on out, we’re going to a party tonight. It’s the last night of Fasching.” So, I spent my very first night in Germany out till three o’clock in the morning at a big Fasching party at the Stadthalle, got up the next day to meet the battalion commander for the first time, and luckily he was out with the mumps.

They told me I was assigned to C Company. I went there and the company commander wasn’t there either. He was off. Nor were there any platoon leaders or an executive officer around, just the first sergeant. He was really ill at ease because the division sent down a no-notice first aid inspection team that morning to check out C Company. The company was to turn out 1 officer and 3 to 4 noncommissioned officers and 20 to 25 soldiers to take this first aid test.

I was the only officer available and I had just arrived; should they or should they not include me? So, the first sergeant asked me, “Well, what do you think?” I said, “Well, yeah, let’s go

do it.” So, I took the first aid exam, and I surely didn’t max it, but I did all right—80 percent or 85, something reasonable for a no-notice kind of thing.

That evening my company commander came back. We went to dinner together and that’s how I got to meet him. Two days later I was on the way to the field because the battalion that my platoon supported, the 37th Armored Infantry Battalion, Mechanized Infantry Battalion, out of Friedberg, was in the field on a command post exercise. He wanted me to have that experience right off. So, I headed out, and they gave me the best map-reading noncommissioned officer in the platoon, the assistant platoon sergeant, so I would get there. We struck off by jeep and went down to find the coordinates of the 37th Infantry Battalion command post.

After the assistant platoon sergeant got lost, I took the map and, based on what I’d been taught at Belvoir and at West Point, we found our way there. From a standing start, I remember walking in to meet the battalion commander. He said, “Well you’re just in time. In half an hour we’re getting all the company commanders together and laying out the duties for tomorrow.” I still remember that vividly. We entered his command van and he said, “Okay, men, I want you to meet Lieutenant Kem. He’s my engineer, my task force engineer.” Here were a couple of armor guys and a couple of infantry captains, his company commanders. It was a cross-reinforced task force. They were talking about the next day’s reconnaissance; they were going to set up a defensive position. We were terrain-walking the general defense plan on the terrain.

After laying out his concept of operations, he said, “Okay, now, Lieutenant, I’m concerned about the tank approach; I want to know what you can do for me.” So, the next day I did my recon with the others and, holy cow, they were defending on a table top. I mean, you couldn’t do much more than interdict a road here or there. There were gentle slopes and terrain that tanks could roll across easily. You just couldn’t put in enough mines to close a gap or do something worthwhile.

So, we got back together, and he asked for each company commander’s report, and they all mentioned how they would occupy their position. Then he turned to me and said, “Well, Lieutenant, what are you engineers going to do for me?” I thought, “Boy, how am I going to tell him I can’t do much?” So, I said, “Well, Sir, there’s not very much we can do to give you a very cohesive, strong defense, so we can do a little bit about breaking up the cohesion of the attack here and there.” He said, “Well, that’s just what I thought. I saw that big bunch of terrain out there and I didn’t think you would be able to do very much.”

Wow! He accepted my view. I thought of my inexperience. Here was a place where I’m in my first week, I’m still living out of the place where I threw my suitcases, and I’m out on a two-day exercise and having to produce quickly. Later, when I was commandant at the Engineer School, I used those kinds of instances to emphasize, “You’ve got to be prepared.”

To finish that week, I came back from those two days in the field and my company commander said, “While you were gone, division wants to open up this training area [later to become the Friedberg Training Area and today a major local training area for one of the

brigades of the 3d Armored Division]. We're going to send your platoon to Friedberg for six weeks on temporary duty to build the entrance road into the area."

So, at the end of that week—I've been in the country now seven days, hardly seen my platoon because I've been out at the command post exercise—I'm with the platoon sergeant and we're moving out to go build a road. So, I spent my next six weeks away from home station. Still didn't have a car, still didn't have a final BOQ [bachelor officers quarters] room, and I'm up making arrangements as the engineer company officer in charge in the area of Combat Command C—we were still organized as combat commands at those times—located in Friedberg. Arranging for billet space for my troops, mess hall, maintenance facilities, moving all of our equipment up. Happened quickly. We had to do the design. Nobody had done a design of the road. Nobody had yet found a quarry; they thought there was one around. All of that befell me to put together the entire operation to build that road.

So, the challenges came very quickly for me as a new platoon leader in C Company.

Q: I sense from your description that the 3d Armored put a lot of emphasis on training. Is that the case? Was that generally true of armored divisions?

A: Oh yes. We trained, trained, trained. I spent at least six months of every year that I was there that first three years away from my BOQ. My particular platoon supported two different battalions, the 37th Mech Infantry and the 32d Tank Battalion, also at Friedberg. Each time they took the Army training test, my platoon went out with them. Each time they went to Grafenwöhr or Wildflecken, my platoon went with them. Each time they had a pre-test, which they always did, my platoon went with them. Each time they had a pre-test command post exercise, which they always did, I'd always go and participate. So, having two different battalions to support, I'd go through all those cycles. Then we'd go to the field for our own 23d Engineer Battalion training or bridging exercises. We were fortunate to have Campo Pond right there in Hanau. This was a big, local training area and we did a lot of training there. So, it was a continuum of field training—combined arms, primarily.

It was a very good place for a young officer to learn about the Army, troops, units, and how engineers are part of the combined arms team. I've always felt that Germany provided the best vehicle for that because you could get combined arms training at the field training installations like Grafenwöhr or Wildflecken. Also, they had the bigger exercises such as the REFORGERS and the winter FTXs [field training exercises] where you could put Corps against Corps, division against division, and get the whole unit chain operating.

In addition, the 3d Armored Division was a particularly good place to start for me because in the heavy division, speed of action characterizes what they do. You really have to learn to think at the speed of your weapons systems. We were just, in 1957, 12 years out of World War II. There was still rubble in some of the cities. There was still that armor mentality carryover that we had. You and I talked earlier about Hollingsworth and all preaching at West Point that armor was firepower, mobility, and shock action. In this 3d Armored Division they would just drum that in all the time.

An engaging thing about it was that it was in the mind. It was preached in the 3d Armored Division that we were all armored; there were armored engineers, armored infantrymen, armored tankers—tankers weren't the only ones in the armored force. So, it was a state of mind of how you did things, and that was mobility, quickly developing your shock action, and using your firepower. We were taught how to do things by frag order, and how to move and go. The alert systems of those days turned us out into our local assembly area, ready to move forward. Sometimes we did move forward to general defense plan positions and then had terrain exercises so we would know the terrain on which we would fight.

I remember later we started having the big movement exercises, probably when [Creighton W.] Abrams was there. He put the entire division on the move after one of the alerts. Division would come out with an order that basically would take division units from wherever they were and put them in a long road march. Of course everybody was joining and leaving at different places, so you could get quite an exercise on road movement, hitting the starting point on time. It was drummed into all of us lieutenants that, boy, you made the starting point—not a minute late, not five seconds early, you did it right on time. Then we made our march intervals on the autobahns, before all of today's German traffic was there.

So, the mind-set of mobility and marshaling your force and delivering your firepower was endemic to the whole division. Those were good lessons for me that carried forth into the future when I commanded the 7th Engineer Brigade—how VII Corps operated and how engineers provided support to divisions who operate that way. I had learned the need to stress the engineer mind-set that has to support that kind of hard-hitting mobile action. Those things led eventually into the thinking that went into the force structure analysis that became E-Force. I mean, the lessons from those days in the 23d Engineers were a genesis for what came later.

As a platoon leader supporting my two battalions, my platoon and I would go to Grafenwöhr and would spend the month or six-week rotation at Grafenwöhr with them, living out in the barracks with them and supporting them on the exercises. Grafenwöhr at that time hadn't been turned into the major range complex that it is today, the live-fire range. It was more of a maneuver place. Now you do less unit maneuver and more live-fire training. Typically during a maneuver battalion training test, one part of it was attacking as an objective the Hoefenohe Church area, and that was tactically moving many kilometers over rough terrain to get to Hoefenohe Church. I'd come up with an engineer plan. I'd take my platoon out in our armored personnel carriers, M-59s. I had difficulty keeping up with two M-59s and one truck—only two of my squads had an M-59.

Then there was the problem of the dozer. I mean, why do we have the M9 ACE [armored combat earthmover] today? Because we had the problem of the roadbound dozer. What to do about the platoon's dozer that couldn't keep up? We would have to give it to the assistant platoon sergeant and say, "Here's where I'm going to be en route to Hoefenohe Church, here's the objective, and we'll be following this route. You need to follow generally this route, and at the end of the day we'll be there. You go to that intersection and we'll police you up."

He wouldn't have radio contact because we had no radio for him. So, we would have to go back later and find him. I'd have to tell my jeep driver that too. I'd have to ride an M-59 because we were going across country. The jeep couldn't keep up. So, I would have to go find my jeep at the end of the period. Then we'd have to go find the tractor-trailer and dozer and bring them in to where we were. At the same time, we're busy preparing to go on to a defensive mission or set up for the obstacle work we needed to do.

The M-59 had an engine on the right and left sides. We had one very sick, lemon M-59. It always managed to break down on every exercise. So, we had to shuffle to make things work, but, having been taught mission accomplished is paramount, you have to make do and find the way to still accomplish the mission even though there are all these kinds of obstacles.

Q: So, you learned things for the future about engineer equipment?

A: Organization and combined arms. The emphasis in the armored division was always combined arms. It was obvious then that engineers were an integral necessity in the combined arms team, and we really were maneuver. We worked with maneuver all the time. It was standard procedure when the 32d Tank Battalion marched that there would be seven tanks and then my engineer platoon, then the rest of the battalion. Many a road march I made on the tank trails of Grafenwöhr in the black of night, watching the cat eyes of the tank in front of me with my M-59s behind my jeep, hoping we'd stop in time before we would run up under the tank ahead. Squinting through the dust, in the dark, we would roam those trails at night and we'd turn off and we'd assemble. I mean, we really practiced moving tanks. The standard procedure always was that my platoon would follow the lead platoon plus the extra two command vehicles of the company in the column.

Q: At this time the engineer equipment hadn't kept up? Wasn't quite adequate for the movement required? For the speed?

A: Well, what wasn't adequate were things that have always gone wrong. Even then we needed the M9 ACE because, although the bulldozer could do the job on the objective when we wanted to push dirt, it couldn't go cross-country. So, it could run in a road convoy but it couldn't go across country. Therefore, we had to find a place to put it. We didn't have enough radios so that everybody could have one, which was why we later insisted the M9 ACE have a radio when some people wanted to cut it out.

I mean, the experience that I had there as an engineer platoon leader armed me with the ability to articulate later why we still had to have the radio, because in the M9 tests at Fort Hood, the location of the radio was a problem because of overheating. One easy solution would have been to take the radio out; then we wouldn't have a problem. I insisted we keep the radio and relocate it because of my experiences of years before and since you want to talk to that M9 guy and be able to move him and have him in the communications net.

The fact that our platoon leader was mounted in a quarter-ton jeep rather than a tracked vehicle was a problem that I've already mentioned. The fact that we only had two instead of

three M-59s was an allocation problem. We eventually got the third M-59 so every squad was track mounted.

Then our M-59, though, was not less capable than the infantry because they were in M-59s. Today, engineers are in M-113s while the infantry is in Bradleys, so we have a capability differential on the move that we did not have then. The basic things that the engineers need to move so they can be responsive to maneuver commander's needs were as evident then as they are today.

Q: It's almost a stereotype. You see it in the movies and you read about it—the amount of reliance a new lieutenant has to place on his sergeants and the importance of getting along with the sergeants. Did you have any experience along those lines? Is that true?

A: Yes and no. Once again, this early experience was something that influenced me in addressing how we try to teach our new lieutenants at Belvoir when I later was the Engineer School commandant. Let me jump ahead from my lieutenant days to my commander, 7th Engineer Brigade in Germany days, which is in between the time that I'm having the experiences I have been discussing and the time I'm commandant.

I was rather disappointed in the understanding of our lieutenants at that time as they came into the 7th Engineer Brigade on what they needed to do “to take charge.” As one example, one night I was on a bridge exercise. I found the lieutenant over at the side of the M4T6 bridge construction action. I went over and talked to him and I said, “How's it going?”

“We're going well. The old sergeant's got it really kicking along.”

I said, “Well, what are you doing?”

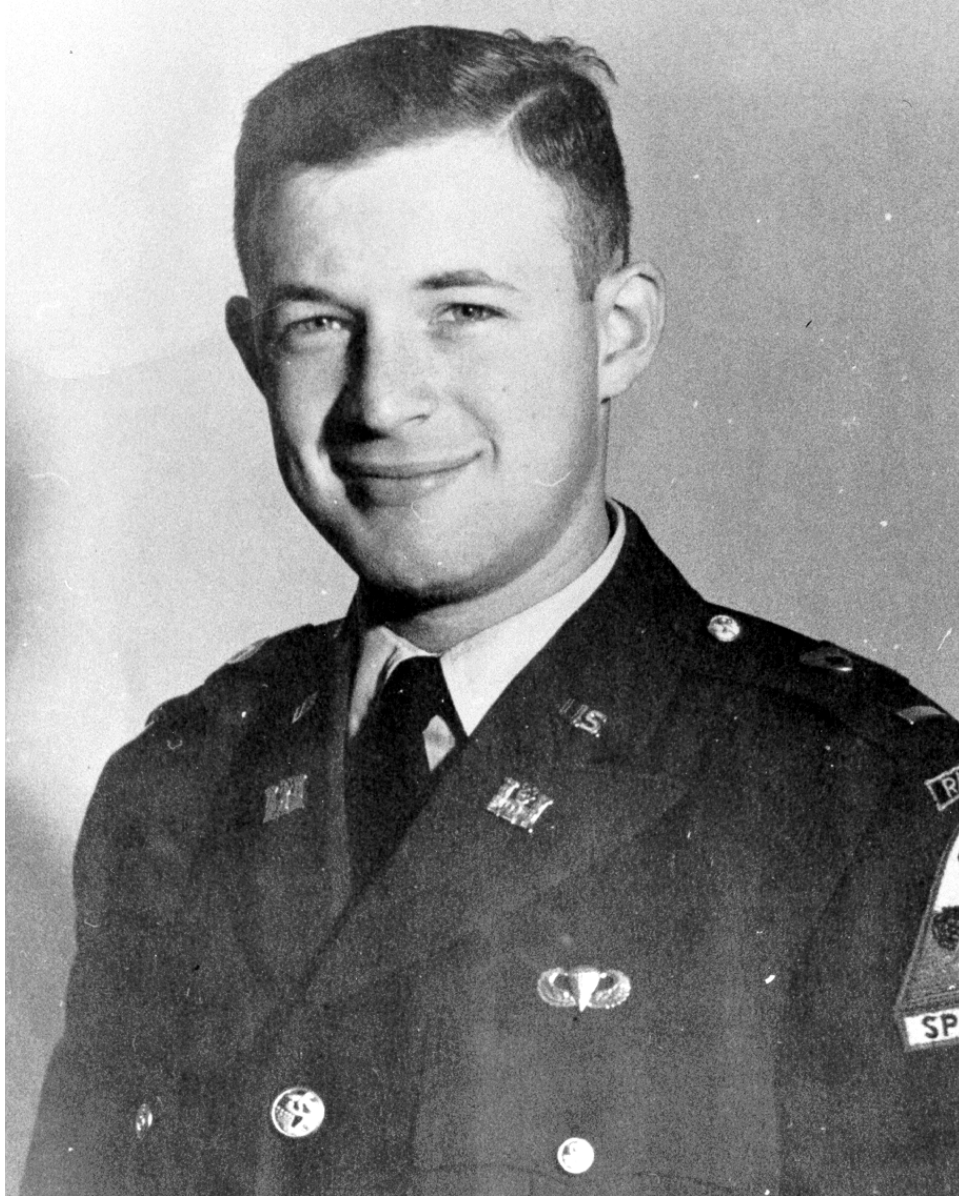
He answered, “Well, I don't have anything to do.”

I thought, “Oh my, we've come a long way” because, obviously, he did have something to do. I remembered my own days, building bridges and being in the midst of things, trying to make sure it was all going, and anticipating and everything else. So, I felt there, in the mid-'70s, that we had a lot of problems in the Army.

Just bringing up a new lieutenant to understand what Max Thurman later really brought to the fore in his “Rule 14” that, “When you're in charge, take charge” had a meaning. I felt I had that because we were all taught that back at West Point, Ranger School, and the Engineer School when I was a lieutenant. The example I gave of my first command post exercise, the first aid example, and the example of going up to build the road a week after my arrival. I mean, there was no doubt in my mind that I was in charge and I had a responsibility to be in charge.

So, now to your question, what does that do to your platoon sergeant relationship? Well, you need that person to help your transition and understand what it really is to lead troops, especially in those days because we did not, at West Point, have the third lieutenant program

or the program where in one of your summers you spent a month out with an active unit. We didn't have that but for a few cadets, and I never had that experience.



*First Lieutenant R. S. "Sam" Kem*

You also have the human nature factor, and I had a platoon sergeant that was very strong-willed. He had always been allowed to run a platoon when there were only two platoon leaders, and he'd been running this platoon for a year. He basically didn't want me there. I was hardheaded also, and so our relationship really deteriorated quickly when he vied with me for who was in command, who was leading that platoon.

It came to the point where the company commander had to do something with one of us three or four months down the way. The platoon would go out to build an expedient M4T6 bridge,

for instance, and I'd want to try it one way and he countermanded the instructions and did it the same way they'd always done it. So, he was moved to another position and I was given a new platoon sergeant.

So, I guess my answer to your question is that I learned things from that platoon sergeant. By the same token, it wasn't the all-enduring, supporting relationship that it could have been and should have been. I would attribute that to him. Human nature was a prime factor. He took that position because he had been a platoon leader time and time again.

Q: Who was the battalion commander?

A: Lieutenant Colonel Howard B. Kaufman was the first. He later was the Rock Island District Engineer. I liked him very much.

Q: This was '56 to '59, I believe.

A: March '57 to November '59.

Q: Yes. Is this about the time that the Army was experimenting with or trying to deal with tactical nuclear weapons? General Taylor, I think, during this period introduced the concept of the pentomic division? How did that affect you?

A: Thank goodness I was spared that because I was in an armored division. The other divisions in Germany were organized pentomic with five battle groups. We were in the old armored division concept with three combat commands. Unlike World War II, where there was a Combat Command Reserve, which was mainly a headquarters that would take elements of the six maneuver battalions and put them together when committed and they'd plan the counterattacks. Now the Third Combat Command was Command C to go along with Commands A and B, and it had maneuver units assigned.

So, I really didn't participate in the pentomic concept. Of course, when we went into the Reorganization Objective Army Division concept later, it was modeled after the armored division. Later, under the reorganization, the mech infantry divisions formed much like the armored divisions with a different mix of tank and mech infantry battalions. They trained the same, fought the same, and had the brigade-to-battalion task force relationship about the same. So, I think I was fortunate in starting off with what was going to be an enduring thing. Again, when I came back as the VII Corps engineer and 7th Engineer Brigade commander later on, we were in a Corps and supporting divisions that were similar to the ones I had been in as a lieutenant.

Q: Did your training place a lot of emphasis on tactical nuclear weapons and dealing with that possibility?

A: We had some. We'd draw curves for fallout, do certain things, but there was not a great emphasis on it. Most of it was because, even then, the feeling in the armored division was, "We'll survive because we can move, and we'll always keep moving."



Now, this is not the tactical nuclear weapon, of course, but we had the atomic demolition munition [ADM] in the 3d Armored Division at that time, and so I did get involved with that and trained in ADM while I was in Germany in that first assignment.

Q: That's a weapon whose fortunes have waxed and waned.

A: Well, I mean, it really wasn't a weapon. It was a demolition munition. To put it in the context of what it could do to destroy something, it had a real purpose. I was very involved in that later in the 7th Engineer Brigade because of the different way it had moved over time, which I can comment on right now—probably the best time to do it.

The standards for the ADM or other nuclear weapons are always very high, and the rules and regulations almost go to the ridiculous when you're training with it, some of them for good reason—safety. Some of them for another good reason—release authority and the need to use it in the right places. Some for good reason like you want to make sure it goes off at the right time and the right place to give you the right obstacle. Other procedures, like make sure you've wiped it 13 seconds after something else happened with the right kind of tissue and all of these kinds of things, were almost laboratory in approach.

So, back when I was trained in this, we were actually handling and inserting the ball. And, as a consequence, we did certain things with a lot of safety in mind. To go through the step-by-step procedure, with tissues and all, I mean, we would fail the training test if anything was amiss—awfully rigorous for the field, for training for combat.

I thought that ridiculous nature was brought to extremes when I was an umpire on an Army training test with another engineer battalion. We were in the field environment at Wildflecken, and they were responsible for putting an ADM in to blow a pass to create an obstacle. As I got out there to evaluate them, the lieutenant came up and wanted to make sure that I approved his substitution list, that they didn't have real Kleenex to wipe the ball with and they were just going to simulate that with something else. I was thinking, "How does that affect mission accomplishment?" I said, "Look, once you get that thing slapped home, if you back off the right distance and you set the right number of things in your timer and it goes click, you pass. If it doesn't go click, you don't pass. I don't care what kind of tissue you have." I mean, that's for the IG [Inspector General] teams. So, higher-ups could descend upon you for that, but here we're talking tactical.

Now, what's that a reflection of? I reflect back to my Ranger School experience, still worried about too much simulation, train realistic, have the right standard, and it's pass or fail depending on whether your operation accomplished the mission. There was that kind of IG environment prevalent then. So, because of that, everything done with ADMs was very rigorously looked upon by the whole battalion staff.

Consequently, we had one company in the battalion that was working the ADM mission, and invariably you had to give the best platoon leader to that company. When it came time for inspection everybody sent a truck over there so they had the best trucks. They didn't leak because you couldn't have anybody leaking any axle grease. So, because of the rigorous

nature of the tests, almost like rotations to the National Training Center today, everything stopped to make sure that the ADM platoon made it unscathed through this rigorous inspection.



*First Lieutenant Kem (right) watched a motor pool vehicle inspection in West Germany in November 1958.*

So, that's the way it was in every engineer battalion in Europe. Then one day someone had the bright idea, "If we could put all this back in one location, we'd probably provide better support. Oh, by the way, get all these battalion commanders off the hook." So, they made an ADM company in each engineer brigade. Thus, when I arrived to command the 7th Engineer Brigade later, I had the 275th ADM Company. I don't remember the numbers, but we had something like six platoons, 300 people, and I don't know how many ADM teams. Lots.

Inspections were an every-week occurrence. I think we counted up that we had an inspection of one kind 48 of the 52 weeks a year, somewhere, involving one of the ADM platoons and some infantry task force that had to provide the security. So, whereas we used to have an

engineer battalion commander's whole staff and the maintenance capability being able to help get that ADM platoon ready to go, now I had one company and one overworked maintenance warrant who had to get some platoon ready to go every week. Thus, we carried a high vulnerability for failure, which before had been spread to all battalions, but they also could provide a lot of resources to help.

We had a major commanding that ADM company. When this poor guy left I got a new one in there, and all of a sudden we started failing inspections. It all came home when I saw my own tail on the line, frankly. I tried to get into and understand the systemic problems. It became obvious that what I had had in the previous company commander was somebody whose strengths carried the day and who did all those things that all those other battalion commanders already had done to pass—switching trucks from one platoon to another, repainting the bumper numbers, taking all the best trucks, but after a while they too wear out. We were really living on the margin of risk of accomplishing the mission because we were so thin. We were short people so he would have to move people from one platoon to another. We weren't ready for wartime but we were accomplishing a lot of different tasks.

So, in the middle of 1977 I went to General Dave Ott, the 7th Corps commander, who had recently called down and said, "What's going on?" I briefed him and proposed major changes of how we in the Corps would employ ADM. This became the new *modus operandi*.

Basically, we needed to cut out some of the ADM teams. In the 7th Brigade at that time we had gone to the point that, no matter how many people we were short, we'd still field every required team. Yet, a soldier had to have certain clearances before he could handle the release material, and you couldn't get those clearances unless you'd been in the Army so long. So, as the personnel system delivered us fewer people and more junior people who hadn't been there long enough, we were down to the margin where there was only the absolute minimum number. Thus, the threshold for failure was really reduced, and nobody wants to fail. I didn't want them to fail—that's not good for their morale. I mean, we all wanted to succeed.

So, we changed the philosophy. If the system could not provide us the resources, we would stand down teams, but we would field teams that met minimum base requirements. I mean, if we were authorized a five-man team we'd never go with less than four, even though we've been previously going with three. We actually stood down the teams, and the Corps put it into their operational plans that we only had so many operational teams at that moment. Thus, the pressure was on the system to improve, much like readiness reporting is supposed to do for other units.

We also got priority from the Corps to get 30 new trucks because our trucks were worn out. Thus, we didn't have to take the old wire-and-shoestring vehicles back again and again, but had some vehicles that might pass inspection.

Then, significantly, we changed the whole concept of operations from taking the ADM forward all the way to delivering it on call, much like artillery. Thus, once someone wanted to employ a demolition munition, they, the infantry, wouldn't have to go all the way back to the depot, vicinity of Kaiserslautern, to pick it up. It seemed absurd that you would fly an

infantry outfit all the way back there from the forward area. That's what really rankled the infantry types, and I thought so too. So, I sold the concept that ADMs would be delivered to the brigade's rear boundary by Corps assets. We engineers would do the pickup; someone else would provide the essential security. Aviation would fly it. We would no longer drive it. I mean, it was absurd to think we were really going to put a vehicle on the road to go all those miles back to Kaiserslautern and then back to the front and make it in any kind of responsive time.

So, we modernized the whole concept of operations. If it's a Corps' mission and if the Corps has a priority for the use of it, the Corps must provide the resources to get it there. Aviation or Corps engineer assets would deliver it to the brigade's rear boundary, where then the employing maneuver commander with his engineers would pick it up, take it forward, and do all the necessary things as before.

When you put ADM operations on that basis, you needed fewer of them. They were more flexible because you didn't have to have ADMs out in many places. Now they would be provided forward. We had fewer people involved. The number of training inspections each year was reduced. You didn't have so many infantrymen and infantry battalions that had to be involved. We reduced our inspection requirements from 48 of the 52 weeks a year down to something like 22 of the 52 weeks a year. That was still a sizable number compared to previously when the battalion commander had it once or twice a year, but at least down to something that made a lot more sense.

We really reconstructed the entire ADM approach, I think, rewriting doctrine in a rather reasonable, logical way. That became the way until General [Bernard W.] Rogers, then the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, got rid of all ADMs in the theater in the mid-'80s, primarily because of, I believe, concern for their availability to terrorists. We now had gone from what was, in my earlier day, a huge contraption down to a rather nice-sized backpack-sized munition.

Q: Storage security wasn't such a big concern in the '50s, but by the '70s, the security of the weapon had become a matter of substantial concern to us.

Wasn't there always the problem of the release authority too? You referred to that. It was a nuclear weapon so it did require rather complicated procedures.

A: Yes, it was always complicated. The problem there, that we also sorted out, was that engineers had to have ADM release handed down to platoon and team level, whereas in the artillery that was at battalion and battery level. So, we engineers had to be training sergeants, Spec-4s, in an arena where artillery could be training captains and majors. That was one of those things that heightened the risk of failure.

The change we made was to ask, "Why do we have to do release there at team level." The people in charge, the employing maneuver unit, ought to have that sort of responsibility. So, we sorted out release authorities and when and where it was to happen. We didn't change the basic release items. We changed who had to handle them.

Q: Let's turn a minute to talk about what it was like to be stationed in Germany during this time.

A: From '57 to '59.

Q: You were at Hanau.

A: Yes.

Q: What were the facilities like in the late '50s? For the BOQs?

A: The 23d Engineer Battalion was in Hessen Homburg Kaserne. Just two years ago [1988], we started fixing up Hessen Homburg for the first time since then. It was an old German kaserne. It still had the rifle racks in the hall in an alcove. It was adequate for our need then, barely. We had a motor pool that was down at the far end of Hutier Kaserne. You had to climb over a bridge over a street between Hessen Homburg and Hutier, and then walk to the motor pool for the tracked vehicles at the far end of Hutier.

We had a cinder courtyard in the middle of all our kasernes where we could have company formations. Typically physical training in the morning was out there, and we could fall out formations for morning work call and that sort of thing. The battalion commander ran the kaserne, where we had our own company messes and luckily our own theater where we could get large numbers of people together.

Years later they put a headquarters and a medical battalion in that same kaserne. They parked tracked vehicles on the middle quadrangle, which really made it awfully tight. I would have thought it would be very difficult to have lived under those conditions.

As a lieutenant living in Germany at that time, my BOQ was near Campo Pond. I had a single room, shared a bath. I ate all of my meals at the officers mess located in old Argonner Kaserne just two blocks from the BOQ. The facilities that are Hanau's today, basic kasernes, were there then. The family housing areas were nearby, so when you were invited to another lieutenant's home in the evening for dinner, as you were from time to time, they were usually within walking distance.

A bachelor's life was spent, when not in the field, out looking for girls, like any other place. You met them in the American community or at the movie, or you could go out and meet German girls. We had one lieutenant in the battalion who was engaged to a German girl, so dates could be arranged through her and her friends for others. There were also the special service girls who operated the rec centers, and the teachers in the Hanau schools lived in a women's quarters nearby. Thus, much of the social interaction was around that.

Garmisch existed as a recreation center, so you could go there to ski in the winter. Then you could book your own travel, either tours or on your own, driving to various places. That was the era of not many German cars on the road and the era of 4.2 marks to the dollar. You know, you could go down the street and get a rump steak for \$1.50 or \$2.00. A lot of the German cars on the road were the little Messerschmidt three-wheelers, more like the cockpit

of an airplane, or another one that was a little more buglike. As I mentioned, there were still city blocks in Hanau that had rubble in them.

The populace was very friendly. There was not the kind of mix between the populace and the military as there was later when I was a brigade commander, as I think about it. Then, I really don't know how much interaction there was between my battalion commander—the higher-ranking folks at that time—and the Germans. I do remember one very interesting experience I had was when I was selected as the junior officer to accompany the battalion commander to Koblenz to meet with a newly forming engineer battalion of the new Bundeswehr. Germany had just reformed the Bundeswehr that same year. We had a very nice evening out, drank a lot of beer, and ate a lot of good soup—interacting with a bunch of very fine German officers who were just forming this new battalion.

Q: Yes, this isn't that long after the war. Germany's still recovering during this period.

A: That's right, it was still a recovery period. I did a lot of personal travel around because I was interested in the area. We could drive to the Taunus Mountains nearby and we could drive down to Würzburg and see the very nice bridges and castles down there. Later we could drive up to—I think it's the Hartz Mountains—and take my new Porsche and run it around the Nurburgring. You could make a 14-kilometer spin around the Nurburgring for two marks. You might be doing that and a Formula-one car would come up behind you, or maybe you would pass a tour bus. Pay your money, and you get a chance to go around Nurburgring.

Q: I wanted to turn back to your experience in the unit as a platoon leader, but I think you referred to the fact that then you went on to be part of the company commander's staff?

A: I was a platoon leader for a year and a half, and one of the interesting things at that time was that the 3d Armored Division was a gyroscope division. It had come to Germany in the summer of '56, and I joined in March of '57. There were only a few of us that came in as individual replacements. After two years I was still one of the five most junior officers in the battalion because it had gyroscoped over with a full complement of officers. Hardly anybody left and it stayed with almost the same group of people for two and a half years. They then left together in the summer of '59. So, opportunities didn't open up very well.

It was so much so that the battalion commander was even thinking of having some people who had been pulled up to be company executive officers go back to be platoon leaders to give other platoon leaders the opportunity to be company executive officers.

I was fortunate that I was picked to be a company executive officer, and I moved to E Company, the bridge company, after about a year and a half in the platoon. I was ready to move. I then spent about nine months as E Company's executive officer.

Of interest at that time in E Company, we did the field tests on a new equipment item called the armored vehicle launched bridge [AVLB]. This had just arrived—the first time the scissor bridge had been in a field unit. We did the field tests on the AVLB, which identified

massive hydraulic leaks that we experienced. It then had to go back and be fixed before it came back.

We also had the great experience of being the first to have an AVLB slide sideways in a small German town on slick cobblestones and wipe out half a building, and the other experiences that happen when you get something new for the first time. My classmate at West Point, Ernie Ruffner, was the bridge platoon leader who conducted those tests.

After having spent that time as bridge company exec, I moved to be the assistant S-3 on the battalion staff, and I finished my tour there. My tour was actually curtailed from a three-year tour ending in March 1960 to November 1959 because it had been decided that bachelors ought to only have a two-year tour; married officers would continue to have a three-year tour. Those of us who were already there had their tours curtailed according to a schedule, so I left in November.

Q: Did your experiences with the bridge company or at battalion have the same impact on you that your platoon leader assignment had? Were there any particular lessons you learned?

A: Sure, every tour you have in the Army builds on another. We have an Army that's already prepared for a mission that we hope never comes, but in getting prepared at any one particular day, you have new people in the job who are learning that job as others move off and up. So, you're always into a job—as you got to know the job, then you'd go to one of greater responsibilities, and so you're always continuing to grow and develop.

I guess the bridge company position gave me a chance to look across the whole battalion. I was pretty accomplished, I thought, by that time in combined arms and in training because I'd been involved with infantry and armor so very much in all their exercises. Now, because of the armored division and the Corps as they thought about their mobility requirements, the training mission was getting across rivers, like the Main River and the Rhine. We practiced a lot of combined arms bridging, much more than was done later when I was in 7th Engineer Brigade or even today. Our major exercises would have bridge crossings. I remember several times being at bridge crossings where the Seventh Army commander and the USAREUR commander would be there watching it.

So, the bridge company was an opportunity to once again learn a lot. The thing I really learned was the value of an exceptional first sergeant. Just working in the company command post with him, watching his ability to handle people and how he organized the company of his day, were good experiences for me. When I'd been in C Company, there was no platoon leader's room. There was no desk; I mean, you had no place to go. You were out leading your platoon. So, the company orderly room was a little godlike place that even platoon leaders didn't go into. The company commander worked out of there and the company exec, and it was the domain of the first sergeant.

So, as a platoon leader—I'm backing up a little bit—when you did your lesson plans and met with your noncommissioned officers you found your own place to do them. When I became a company exec, then, it broadened the perspective of how things operate. We had a relatively

easy going company commander, but a very strong first sergeant. It was a period where I learned about how multiple things bigger than a platoon go together and fit, and how you support multiple different operations. Good experience.

I moved up to be the assistant S-3. It was really a battalion to maximize learning, for a couple of different reasons. I knew a lot about maintenance. That was another thing the 3d Armored Division and 23d Engineers did a lot of. I mean, motor pools and maintenance were ingrained. You took care of your stuff—I knew that from being a platoon leader and the company exec in a bridge company where we had all those trucks and the M4T6 bridge and the new AVLB platoon and all of that.

Colonel Howard B. Coffman was my first battalion commander; Colonel John Frasrand was the second. Then Colonel Nick Carter came in and took command in the early summer of '59. Anyway, I became the S-3, as I recall, about March of 1959. This was now the time, if you recall my talking about the gyro rotation, that this group of people were leaving. For the first time we were getting a turnover of people—new people, new company commanders, and in all the staff activities.

I ought to make a comment about the company commanders we had back in '59. During my first couple of years in the battalion, our company commanders were old—that's a relative term—grizzled veterans. I think John Pick, when he was my company commander, was on about his fifth company. T.G. Smith was my first company commander. He was followed by Larry Smith. T.G. was short, Larry was tall. T.G. was initially the company commander, Larry Smith was the S-1, and Larry Smith came down and took the company, and T.G. went up to be the assistant 3, replacing Jack Campbell, who became the executive officer of D Company. All were good officers and taught me a lot.

Here was this group of folks who had been over there together, knew each other well, and all interacted with each other, all competed with each other, and a lot of them had Korea experience and multiple companies. Now in 1959 we were making this turnover, and the Smiths went home and the senior lieutenants went home, and now all of a sudden there was an opportunity to move up. Major Jim Foster had come in to be the S-3, and he was my S-3 boss to start off with. Then he left and Major Vern Pinky came in to be the S-3. There was all this change that summer, and that was during the rotation time I was the assistant S-3. The leadership of the division changed, too, and General Frederick Brown came in to be the division commander and Brigadier General Abrams came in to be the assistant division commander.

With Nick Carter, we had a can-do operator. He had an outward flair, very oriented to operations. Lieutenant Colonel Frasrand had been more methodical and middle ground. So, there was a new spirit in the battalion, I think, because we'd been alike so long, and in the people's last few months of all being together, we hadn't had much change. Carter ignited a whole new thinking of things. Pinky came in to be the S-3 and it was all new. So, it was kind of exciting for me as an assistant S-3, and I was a bridge between the two. Having been the assistant S-3 three months under Foster, the old S-3, and Frasrand, the battalion commander,



and now with the arrival of the new group I was part of the transition, and I could really watch that and enjoy it.

We had our engineer battalion Army training test that fall in October. It was very exciting as we prepared for that, going up with a whole bunch of new people to take the pre-test at Wildflecken, and having gone through many of those in years past with the same old group, good as they were. This was exciting because we did things differently with a new flare and with a more aggressive operational mode. They were good tests, and so very enjoyable.

Carter's idea was that the engineer battalion companies and platoons had to be able to move like armor because we were an armored division. We had to be able to move off the road into a quick holding area and then move back on the road and move. So, we were practicing those kinds of operations.

We took our Army training test as an engineer battalion. Even though we would normally support infantry and armor—that's how we were going to fight—in those days for some reason we would take a training test as an integrated battalion. We would have missions in which a company would go out to support somebody but that somebody wasn't there. So, that part of it was a little bit off-line, but then we practiced other things we couldn't do otherwise. So, we had a lot of big moves and heavy moves.

Now, as I mentioned, I was in the S-3 section. We put on platoon tests that spring for every platoon in the battalion, and we got to design the tests out of the S-3 section. I could design it based upon what I had learned being out on command post exercises with the kind of experiences I had when I had to be "in charge," the kind of things that came out of my going out with the 32d Tank and 37th Mech Infantry in combined-arms training, and the things I learned in Ranger School—that you shouldn't simulate anything if you can make it realistic.

So, we put together some rather realistic tests in which I operated as the maneuver task force S-3. We set up a maneuver task force tactical operations center in the field that I operated from to include a night shift. We would bring the platoon leaders into the operations center to see me, the infantry task force S-3, and we would give them "eyeball-to-eyeball" the missions in a playacting mode much as I had received missions as a platoon leader in years past. We had an S-4 and the materials and the supplies needed, trying to replicate real-life things as they did their various missions. We tried to never put them in the same place a second time, and they never had to stop after having tactically put in a bridge and administratively take out that bridge. They never went admin during the five days. We kept them always in a training mode, all of which were outgrowths of my Ranger School experience.

The kinds of things that the 3d Division was doing at that time, I thought, really prompted our thinking and made for rather good training. For example, in our last day of the Army training test at Wildflecken, after we'd been doing all of these kinds of various operating support activities and engineer missions, we were given a mission in the middle of one defensive scenario to move, say 55 kilometers back to the Main River in the vicinity of Hanau. This was a tactical march, moving the whole battalion. When we got there, we were

to conduct a river crossing across the Main River, building bridges in support of the division (simulated) who was making this crossing.

We pulled our various companies back out of the missions they were doing. Once they'd finish a mission, we'd put them on the road, and so it was all staggered. It was not a nice clean move, like moving out of bivouac. I mean, they were all out doing operational missions. We wrote that order, got the battalion on the move, and we were to meet our bridge company and other bridge elements from V Corps at the crossing location.

It was complicated—both sending and meeting—as well as thinking and operating on the move. Running down the road in our armored personnel carrier from Wildflecken, we got the word by message that so much of our bridges had been destroyed that we must be prepared to link an M4T6 bridge with a Class 60 bridge. We had never done that before—never had practiced it. Now, here we were already on the road, halfway to the place we're going to do it, we're meeting the folks who had the Class 60, and we now had the rather interesting task of determining how to put them together.

Gerry Galloway, later a brigadier general and the dean at West Point, was B Company commander at that time. With the M4T6 bridge at that time, the E Company provided the bridge to a line company who did the building. Basically, Gerry was on the ground with B Company, and we figured out a way of putting it together. Then we were there on the river bank all morning, conjecturing about whether it was going to work and how we were going to make it work. Essentially the proceeding was what was in the field manuals, at least later. I certainly had never read it before that day.

B Company took what M4T6 was not destroyed, built it from the near shore, balk after balk after balk. Then the Class 60 was assembled at another site on the near shore and you moved across to the far shore. The joining section was constructed at another site on the near shore, with M4T6 balk at one end, Class 60 on the other end, and B Company lashed them together with cables because they didn't join naturally. Then an AVLB was overlaid over that joint and lashed in. Then that completed link raft was moved into place, married it up with the Class 60, and then closed with the M4T6 to make the complete bridge.

So, this was certainly an interesting technical problem, but also an interesting management problem since we received the mission while on the move and had to figure it out on the move. I mean, people's thinking power was put to the test. Folks went to work to accomplish parts of the mission. Other folks were trying to figure out how we'd make the marriage work. I use that as an example of the kinds of challenges and opportunities that were thrown down to ensure we were thinking, capable, and able to move and accomplish our mission in armored style.

Q: That's interesting. You mentioned earlier training, preparing for what you hoped would never come. In Europe at this time and in the '57-'60 time frame—you arrived in March of '57, not too long after the Hungarian revolution and repression. What was that situation like? The tensions that were experienced in terms of what might happen.

A: There was nothing in my recall concerning the Hungarian affair. I guess that it was all over by my arrival.

Q: That's okay.

A: We were all very cognizant of the fact that we might have to fight, and the Soviet military mission was always around. We would see them continuously going around checking our training. So, we were very attuned that we were at the forward edge of freedom, and operations security and preparations were paramount. We practiced the general defense plan all the time. We had target folders for all of our targets; we did terrain walks with our supported maneuver units, as I mentioned before, on the actual terrain. The exercises were all oriented toward the same kind of mobility and combined-arms action. So, the threat was something that we all anticipated. We were proud the 3d Armored Division was astride the Fulda Gap, and that was drummed into us all the time, and we knew we'd be ready.

Another thing that happened during one particular period of tension, there was an alert for the division to be prepared to move up and move along the Helmsted Corridor to Berlin, a forced entry. The Russians had threatened to close all access to Berlin. Bridging was required, and I was detailed as the commander of the bridge unit. I was the executive officer of the bridge company at that time, and I was going to go as the commander of this bridge element, which had more than a platoon. We never moved north, but we were within what we thought might be hours of a mission to move with one of the battalion's line companies to go along with a division maneuver element in a show of force to Berlin. So, we were all very cognizant of our mission at the "frontier of freedom"—always.

Q: Did you have the feeling when you were there in the late '50s that there was more a sense that war might be imminent than there was when you were back in the '70s? Was the Army in Germany more finely honed, more on edge in terms of the possibility of war than when you went back later?

A: No, I don't think so. I think that kind of mission cognizance was present throughout the Army's whole time in Europe. One of the great things about that is—as a leader you can point to the Soviet threat as a real *raison d'être* for our being there, for our training.

Because USAREUR got the dollars, you could go out and train, and train the mission and use the general defense plan for the mission training. It gave training a real credibility and reality that my battalion's Army training test at another time at Fort Leonard Wood never had. When I was in the 82d Airborne Division later, the 307 Engineers, Vietnam was current and provided that same emphasis. We went out to Camp McCall and took an exercise where we were training the counterinsurgency Vietnam mode kind of thing. There was a *raison d'être* too. Certainly whenever you're in Germany that realistic threat and mission has always been a paramount thing to drive your training.

Now, I think there were some years in Germany—at the end of the Vietnam period and before I arrived in '76, the downtime in Germany—in which there were a lot of problems, a lot of leadership and discipline problems. With this low ebb of the Army in the early '70s,

there were a lot of things on our leaders' minds that drove them to think about other things too. They probably had difficulty getting the message across. I don't think the mission emphasis was ever gone, but they may have had such other problems—discipline, riots, racial tension, not the least a lack of training funds—that there were other things on the platter.

One of the things, while I was there in the later '70s, that helped us get out of that situation was, first of all, the new rules on drugs were in effect where you didn't have to tolerate drugs; you could throw a person out right away. Then there was the great sense of bonding with the community that General [George S.] Blanchard, CINCUSAREUR [Commander in Chief, U.S. Army, Europe] really got into when he was in Europe, that "We are citizens of the German community, interactive German neighbors." So, the whole thing of the Army really coming to grips with our multiracial dimension and working so that blacks and whites understood and appreciated each other and the defusing of the tensions that had been going on went on further while I was there.

That then allowed a new commander like Lieutenant General Dave Ott, who came in as VII Corps commander, to focus on, "Let's get back to training." This accelerated as our whole general defense plan changed then because we moved to the "forward defense concept." We were moving forward and changing all general defense plans, which prompted a change in the thinking of everybody. So, leadership turned to rethinking and pushed other leadership levels into action. Now we all had to go out and reestablish and walk the new terrain—new positions, new avenues, new obstacles, and we had to redo new target folders.

Continuing my leap-ahead at that point when I was in the VII Corps, 7th Brigade, I changed whole support relationships just to charge new thinking by commanders and staffs. Our 9th Engineer Battalion had always supported the 3d Infantry Division (Mech). I really thought they were stale. We were doing things the same old ways we had done them for years. We had something new in the Corps—the 12th Panzer Division, a German unit, would be the Corps to fight in our sector. I hooked up the 9th Engineer Battalion to support the 12th Panzers and let the 237th Engineer Battalion take over the support role of the 3d Infantry Division—not popular with my 9th Engineer Battalion commander, who liked his relationship with the 3d.

One of the major reasons I did that was because I thought things were stale. I wanted new thinking. So, when the new battalion commander, Ted Vander Els, arrived, he had a new challenge to support a Panzer division, which he never had before. That really stirred the juices of the 9th.

The 237th now had a division to support, the 3d. We broke all the old relationships and had to establish new ones. This stirred all the creative juices of both the commander of the 10th Engineer Battalion in the 3d Mech Division and the commander of the 237th because they had to work out new things. I thought it was all for the good. I took the 78th Engineer Battalion and had them start working with the 1st Armored Division, whereas before, just the 82d Engineer Battalion supported them and the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment. Again, I had stirred the creativity of the leadership thinking in the 78th. So, I really was able to use that for good motivational and training cause. As we moved to forward defense, everything was

being rethought. Missions changed, as did relationships, and we had everybody doing some creative thinking, not just hanging with the old.

I don't know how I got into that.

Q: Comparing the two.

A: So, I always think that the Warsaw Pact threat has been the paramount thing driving training and the Army in Europe. I think there have probably been some years where other things were also high on the platter because they had to be dealt with.

Q: I think we may be at the point to wrap up the 3d Armored Division, unless there are other things that you can think of about your experiences there that we should talk about.

A: I'd like to say one more thing about my first assignment. I mentioned it before. USAREUR was a great place to start. I've always thought, as I mentioned, that starting off as a junior officer in Europe with a heavy division—where you had the mission, general defense plan, “Frontier of Freedom,” an orientation away from post, thinking, training, and being able to fight over a big mass of terrain—was a tremendous beginning. You couldn't just fall out to train on post or, say, the far side of Fort Riley, for instance, or even the western side of Fort Hood, as big as that is. You had to think in terms of real geography and terrain and real fighting. You had to deal with the problems of a deployed Army, that is, soldiers and families away from home, and a populace.

With all those ingredients, you also had the cultural aspects of being over there, which were fun. The whole thinking of the heavy division was something that I think is awfully important for an engineer officer who has to know that we do our job in combined arms. Combined arms in the context of the heavy division in Germany is movement, working on frag orders, being able to be flexible enough to change in midstream, and it's not a set piece at all.

So, even later in an airborne division—which is strategic in its rapidity of deployment but methodical after it hits the ground—my experience was prompted by that same kind of thinking that we ought to be able to operate by the frag order; we have to be flexible enough to change; we have to be mobile and act decisively. Then later, when I went back to Germany and the VII Corps, 7th Engineer Brigade, those same kinds of things were there.

Being in an armored division at the start meant I really learned combined arms, that our reason to be is not “engineer” but our reason to be is to ensure that the division's major weapons systems, the tank and the Bradley, get to where the mission is. The very key role that the engineer has—dual-hatted—both leading engineer troops and also providing engineer counsel and guidance to his commander, is paramount. We put a lot on our engineer platoon leaders and company commanders but nothing more than what you get in that experience in Europe.

That ability to think on the move, the ability to understand that you do it that way by combined arms, really is something you learn best in Europe in an armored division.

Another experience just came to mind that I ought to recount, which really speaks to the engineer's role in giving advice and counsel to the maneuver task force commander. I gave the one example earlier where I was introduced by the task force commander who said, "Meet *my* engineer." Later on, I was out on a field exercise with the 32d Tank Battalion, again a reinforced task force. A mission had been given to seize an objective. The interesting part of the objective was that two-thirds of it was on the right side of a river and one-third on the left side, and this was not a little stream. I mean, we're talking about, you know, 8 to 10 floats of M4T6 to cross it.

We moved out to do our recons and then came back in to talk to the battalion task force S-3 and commander so the commander could develop his commander's concept of the operation. I was one of the first back, and I went up to the battalion commander and he said, "Hey, now, that stream, that's no problem, is it? You can probably get across that in a matter of minutes."

I thought, "Oh, my God, where's he coming from?" I mean, that's unrealistic in the sense of here's the objective and you don't attempt a bridge crossing in the middle of assaulting your final objective. So, I suggested to him that, obviously, his force could take the right two-thirds part of the objective but he needed a force on the other side, much before reaching the objective, to make that assault.

Because I'd been in the pre-briefs, the options available seemed to show that there were a few companies from another battalion available on the other side of the river. Probably this was the teaching point that brigade or division was trying to make. I suggested that he should request them to be attached to him so they could assault the other side of the river and take that one-third of the objective. The light bulb came on, they made that request to brigade, they were given those assets, and they conducted the attack like this lowly lieutenant had suggested was probably the right answer. He looked like a champ. [Laughter]

So, I think the engineer officer on the battlefield has an opportunity at the earliest point in his career of anyone to get a perspective of combined arms in fighting the battle. To be successful, he must do that. I mean, the engineer must be able to see things like the battalion S-3 that he is supporting because he is contributing to him and he is influencing across the whole unit. When I would go out on the field exercises, my peer lieutenants of infantry were sitting in their foxholes waiting for the company commander to come back from his recon and tell them what their mission was for the next day. I, as an engineer platoon leader, was out there with those company commanders surveying the terrain, trying to figure out what was going on so we could make recommendations to the maneuver commander and his S-3 that would contribute to the molding of that commander's concept for the operation. So, we were contributing to his paragraph 3(a) "Concept of Operation" of the order. The others were waiting to be told what they were going to do the next day so they could execute. So, the engineer lieutenant has a higher level of experience and insight about combined arms than his peers.

By the same token, you see, that's another ingredient of E-Force because of that experience. The problem is that the platoon leader or company commander can't be planning and also

supervising execution at the same time. So, the lieutenant in the everyday battle that goes on just isn't capable of doing sufficient recon for the next operation while executing something that may be going on at the same time, such as putting in a minefield, getting prepared for breaching operations, and the rest of it. You can turn some of that over to the platoon sergeant, but what we need really is a kind of leadership comparable to what the infantry and armor have—that is, a captain supporting that task force. So, it would be a captain company commander doing those recons with the other infantry and armored captain company commanders while the lieutenants—and the sergeants—are preparing the platoons or off executing their missions.

So, once again, my experience back then in the 23d Engineer Battalion, as well as broadening for me, also proved to me that you really can't get it done in sustained battle day after day with that engineer organization. There was a void in capability, and we needed to correct it by putting the same level of leadership planning staff capability in this maneuver element. Mind what I said before, engineers maneuver like armor and infantry. To do that, we had to be comparable to the speed of the heavy division battle. So, those lessons were ingredients that later on became input to E-Force.

Q: Just one other issue about being platoon leader. You were talking about discipline and morale problems in the '70s. What about during this period of working with troops? Any lessons you learned there about morale, discipline, working in a foreign country, cultural problems?

A: Well, for the young lieutenant, this is his first hands-on leadership experience. It is where you really find out about yourself and whether you can put it together. How you work that platoon sergeant and three squad leaders and your 27 people makes you learn a lot about yourself. You learn what works and what doesn't work, and whom you can trust and whom you can't trust, what you need to check and what you don't need to check, and you learn about people and their foibles and the fact they're humans and they respond to different things.

So, I had a platoon made up of common, ordinary folks. There were some good folks, some bad folks. They were not the caliber of folks we have today in our all-recruited Army, without doubt. We had our racial problems back then too. We had the black bars and the white bars. One of the banes of a lieutenant's existence in those days was courtesy patrol. My, did we hate to be on courtesy patrol! The concept was in the 3d Armored Division that if we had people out getting drunk, getting in a fight, we would find them and bring them home before the military police brought them home. I think I pulled courtesy patrol every—it seemed like every fourth or fifth weekend. I was given a jeep and went out with a noncommissioned officer. Typically I would take a black noncommissioned officer so that we would go together into either black bars or white bars. We would try to walk around and be present. When we found somebody who'd already had too much to drink, we would get him back to his unit—that is, turn him into his unit with no report to the military police—take care of our own that way.

So, you really did learn about life, people, what motivates people, what turns them on or turns them off, and yourself in those days. It was a great leadership laboratory, if you will.

We had folks in those days that the judge said, “Either you go to jail or you join the Army.” So, how do you get them motivated? And, you know, I was the guy who came out of Ranger and Airborne Schools, and we did the chants and we did our runs, and that was new and different for an armored division. Nowadays, this happens all over the Army. It was a real developing experience.

### **62d Engineer Battalion (Construction)**

**Q:** You left the 23d Engineer Battalion about November of 1959, I think, right? Then you went to the 62d Engineer Battalion (Construction) at Fort Leonard Wood. What position did you go into in the 62d?

**A:** I went back to being a platoon leader again. That was one of the real problems of the period, a real morale breaker. You have to be cognizant of such things when you’re doing reorganization things to force structure like we are today. I went from all the excitement of being on the frontier of freedom and all the missions in Europe, back to a unit in the continental United States that was well down the priority curve—short of officers, among other things. The officer they had deleted was the company exec out of every company. You were either the company commander or you were a platoon leader.

Now, you need to know, I guess it’s pertinent, how I arrived there because, in fact, I didn’t want to leave Germany, and I had written the Seventh Army Engineer and asked to extend my tour and stay. It turns out the commanding general of Fort Leonard Wood of that day, who was also the commander of the 18th Engineer Brigade, which was located there, had just complained to his personnel boss. This happened to be the Chief of Engineers at that time because an engineer personnel officer was in the Office of the Chief. He complained that he was always getting shortchanged and never got any Regular Army officers. So, they decided to fix that and thus sent 12 Regular Army lieutenants to Fort Leonard Wood beginning in the summer of ’59.

I was the 12th to arrive. I needed to be a company commander and I wanted to be a company commander. I was told, “You can be a company commander in March, but all those positions are filled for now.” They really were, by all of those other 12 who had arrived. We were all peers from peer groups ’55, ’56, ’57, coming back from many places, most of them from Germany. So, I begrudgingly became a platoon leader again.

The other interesting point about all of that is, having got his 12 Regular Army lieutenants the summer of ’59, they were all gone by the summer of ’60. So, the longest one there lasted a year. I was the last to arrive, in November. I was gone by May 1960. Almost all 12 were selected for civil schooling, and we moved off to go to our civil schools that summer. So, I arrived at Leonard Wood, and they told me that they’d give me a company command in March. One week later my orders came out for civil schooling in June, and they said, “Forget